

(Draft - Awaiting Formal Approval)
**MINUTES OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT**
June 17, 2009 – 8:00 a.m. – Room 25 House Building

Members Present:

President Michael G. Waddoups, Chair
Speaker David Clark, Vice-Chair
Sen. Patricia W. Jones
Sen. Sheldon Killpack
Sen. Ross I. Romero
Rep. Kevin Garn

Rep. James Gowans
Rep. David Litvack

Staff Present:

Mr. John Fellows, General Counsel
Ms. Beverlee LeCheminant

Note: A list of others present, copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

President Waddoups called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

MOTION: Rep. Litvack moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2008 meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Annual Performance Review of:

Legislative Auditor General

Mr. Schaff announced that his office has been selected to receive the 2009 NCSL Excellence in Evaluation Award at the upcoming annual meeting in Philadelphia. He indicated that this is the highest award given to a legislative audit office and is based on the last four years of work done. Mr. Schaff said legislative leadership and the Audit Subcommittee as well as the body of the Legislature are a big part of this award. He noted three things he feels are important in the work of his office: 1) they cannot have impact unless the Legislature puts them into issues that are troubling to them; 2) independence and tremendous support from leadership; and 3) recommendations. Mr. Schaff said that the Audit Subcommittee is very active and is requiring and demanding that action be taken on these recommendations. His office does a detailed follow-up report once or twice a year of an agency that the Legislature is concerned about and then goes back and makes sure the recommendations have been implemented.

Mr. Schaff stated that he has a quality staff. Two-thirds of his office are certified, either CPA's, certified internal auditors, certified fraud examiners, and two attorneys. He is pushing hard for all of his employees to be certified as he believes it is the credential that allows his staff to continue to develop and do the kind of work the Legislature would want them to do.

Mr. Schaff distributed a graph of what his office expects to do this year. They have promised that they would reduce the scope of audits which means they will try to cut to the real issues and get more audits out. They have also been able to produce more audits because two years ago the Legislature gave them an increase in staff. They have lost three staff members this past year so there has been a little dip in the productivity because of that, but they are still working very hard and he expects his office will be able to get 20 audits out with the existing staff. Mr. Schaff thanked the Legislature for their support.

Speaker Clark said he thinks he speaks on behalf of not only this committee, but the entire Legislature, in extending congratulations for an award that takes the scope of four years work

Legislative Fiscal Analyst

Mr. Ball distributed and discussed a list of accomplishments and improvements of his office and their ongoing objectives. He said one of his broad goals has been to work more closely with his colleagues in the other two legislative offices and he feels he has done that. Another of his goals was to make sure that his office is providing coverage and support to all legislators and he feels they have accomplished that as well.

Speaker Clark expressed appreciation for the Legislative Fiscal Analyst's Office. He indicated that last session was a session that was entirely centered around the budget and he appreciates what was done from their office.

Director, Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

Mr. Christensen expressed appreciation for the other two directors and said he feels they work better together than ever before. He indicated that his office is stretching themselves in serving the Legislature as they are down several employees and no longer use law clerks and research assistants. He stated that all three of the legislative office directors are grateful to the Legislature for the support they provided their offices with the one-time funding for the last fiscal year.

Mr. Christensen noted that one of the things his office is now doing is giving legislators increasing constituent services so there has been a substantial increase in the number of hours his office spends helping legislators deal with constituent problems. His office has staffed the legislative committees, drafted bills and conducted policy research. Last year was a particularly busy year for his office with the staffing of some major task forces in addition to the interim committees and the Ethics Committee, which took a lot of staff time from his office.

Mr. Christensen said his goal is to try to improve the quality of his staff as they have turnover and to continue to provide additional training. He noted that he has interviewed the interim committee chairs this last session regarding his staff and has received nothing but compliments and praise for how his staff has been serving their interim committees. He shared several quotes from the committee chairs expressing their appreciation for the work the staff does for them.

Rep. Garn congratulated all three offices for their excellent work.

Sen. Jones said she cannot think of one negative thing in the nine years she has been a legislator. When she thinks of all three of the legislative offices, some of the words that come to her mind are professional, nonpartisan, eager to help, knowledgeable, comforting, hard working, dependable, innovative, and admirable performance. She thanked the offices for helping the minority party with its budget this past session.

Sen. Killpack said he would have to stretch to think of any negatives regarding the legislative offices. The staff members are very professional and do a phenomenal job.

Speaker Clark moved to close the meeting and go into an executive session. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was reopened.

President Waddoups told the three directors that in the executive session the compliments continued for the three offices and how appreciative the Legislature is of all the work that the legislative offices do. They do more than the average would expect. He indicated that, unfortunately, with today's budgetary situation, it is difficult for leadership to do much more than say thank you, but the motion was made that all three directors be retained at their current salary. President Waddoups stated that leadership would like to do more, but felt the directors would be uncomfortable if they did anything different in today's economy based upon what the directors have done with their own staff.

3. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

4. Adjournment

MOTION: Speaker Clark moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

President Waddoups adjourned the meeting at 9:07 a.m.